ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for reducing performance overhead of a media server sending packetized audio/video data to an end-player or user is provided. The main sources of performance overhead associated with a media server transmitting packetized audio/video data are (1) copying data from the user space buffer to the kernel buffer and (2) context switching from user level to kernel level. There are several techniques that can be used to address overhead. One technique involves creating an aggregate packet, which includes a policy, at the user level and transmitting this aggregate packet from the user level to the OS level with a system call. A second technique involves manipulating packets based on a policy in the OS level rather than in the user level. The manipulation of packets may include redirecting packets or splitting packets.